

?Three killed, nine injured in Jacksonville, Florida mass shooting

By Matthew Taylor
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Three people were killed and at least nine injured on Sunday afternoon in Jacksonville, Florida when a gunman opened fire inside of a crowded bar at the Jacksonville Landing, a popular downtown shopping area along the St. Johns River. The gunman was among the dead, reportedly from a self-inflicted wound.

The entire downtown Jacksonville area was under police lockdown after the shooting, with multiple police helicopters hovering overhead. SWAT teams swept through the Landing, where multiple people went into hiding after the shooting started. The Jacksonville Sheriff's office later announced that they had no further suspects in the shooting.

The bar where the shooting took place, the Good Luck Have Fun Game Bar, was hosting a video game tournament at the time. A live stream of one of the games being played, the popular Madden NFL 19 football game, recorded two players and the audio recording of the shooting.

At least eleven gunshots could be heard in rapid succession on the audio recording. Before the video feed was cut off, a red dot, possibly from a laser gunsight, appeared on the shirt of one of the players. It is unknown at this time if that man was among the killed.

The shooter has been identified by law enforcement as 24-year old David Katz, a resident of Baltimore, Maryland who was a participant in the tournament. Police in Baltimore were preparing to search the suspect's house on Sunday night. His motive remains unknown.

Many of the players participating in the tournament came from out of state. One player from Chicago, Marquise, who lost friends in the shooting, described the melee to Action News Jax:

“Everyone running for their lives. People were being

trampled, people were hiding, everyone was screaming in fear. We lost a few good men, men who were leaders in our Madden community ... Politicians wake up because the people you are supposed to be representing are dying.”

The shooting at the Jacksonville Landing capped off a violent weekend in the city, which also saw one student killed and two others injured in a shooting at a high school football game on Friday night.

Governor Rick Scott, Senator Marco Rubio and other Florida politicians traveled to Jacksonville on Sunday night, intent on capitalizing upon the tragedy. Scott, who is trying to capture the US Senate seat held by longtime Democratic Senator Bill Nelson in November's elections, can be counted on to use the killings to call for increased spending on police and the further militarization of public spaces in response to the shooting.

The various Democratic party politicians around the state, including those currently competing for Scott's seat, can also be relied upon to offer hypocritical condolences to the victims while simultaneously advancing their own political agenda. Just as in the aftermath of the Pulse nightclub shooting in Orlando in 2016 and the Parkland school shooting in February of this year the Democrats will, predictably, call for greater gun control measures which will do nothing to address the social and economic problems which contribute to so many mass shootings.

Neither the Democrats nor the Republicans can offer a solution to the plague of mass shootings in the US because the source of this terrifying phenomenon is capitalism itself which has produced endless wars and historic levels of social inequality.

Very little is known about the killer thus far. Whatever psychological damage that drove him to

murder and take his own life must have been severe.

But he did not come of age in a vacuum. At 24 years old, Katz had spent his entire adult life in a country perpetually at war. He grew up in a society where the routine slaughter of civilians in the Middle East by the US military and its allies is reported on in the same news programs that trumpet the billions of dollars made by ultra-rich investors in the stock market. He grew up in a country where militarized police kill more than three people every day with impunity and the intelligence agencies spy on the entire population with the protection of the courts.

This is the diseased society from which the killer emerged—one that will continue to produce tragedies like the shooting in Jacksonville until capitalism is replaced with a more rational socialist economic and social order.

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